



**[4910-13-P]**

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Federal Aviation Administration**

**14 CFR Part 39**

**[Docket No. FAA-2017-0757; Product Identifier 2017-SW-022-AD]**

**RIN 2120-AA64**

**Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron Canada Limited Helicopters**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain serial numbered Bell Helicopter Textron Canada Limited (BHTC) Model 429 helicopters. This proposed AD would require marking a serial number on life-limited forward spars and actuator fitting assemblies. The actions of this proposed AD are intended to prevent an unsafe condition on these products.

**DATES:** We must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** You may send comments by any of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Docket:** Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for sending your comments electronically.

- **Fax:** 202-493-2251.

- **Mail:** Send comments to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to the “Mail” address between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.,

Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

### **Examining the AD Docket**

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2017-0757; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this proposed AD, the Transport Canada AD, the economic evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations (telephone 800-647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

For service information identified in this proposed rule, contact Bell Helicopter Textron Canada Limited, 12,800 Rue de l’Avenir, Mirabel, Quebec J7J1R4; telephone (450) 437-2862 or (800) 363-8023; fax (450) 433-0272; or at <http://www.bellcustomer.com/files/>. You may review the referenced service information at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Helene Gandy, Aviation Safety Engineer, Regulations & Policy Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222-5413; email [helene.gandy@faa.gov](mailto:helene.gandy@faa.gov).

### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

#### **Comments Invited**

We invite you to participate in this rulemaking by submitting written comments,

data, or views. We also invite comments relating to the economic, environmental, energy, or federalism impacts that might result from adopting the proposals in this document. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. To ensure the docket does not contain duplicate comments, commenters should send only one copy of written comments, or if comments are filed electronically, commenters should submit only one time.

We will file in the docket all comments that we receive, as well as a report summarizing each substantive public contact with FAA personnel concerning this proposed rulemaking. Before acting on this proposal, we will consider all comments we receive on or before the closing date for comments. We will consider comments filed after the comment period has closed if it is possible to do so without incurring expense or delay. We may change this proposal in light of the comments we receive.

## **Discussion**

Transport Canada, which is the aviation authority for Canada, has issued Canadian AD No. CF-2017-02, dated January 16, 2017, to correct an unsafe condition for BHTC Model 429 helicopters, serial numbers (S/N) 57150, 57168, 57176, 57210, 57211 through 57216, 57265, 57266, 57267, and 57287. Transport Canada advises that forward spars part number (P/N) 429-031-213-103 and 429-031-213-104 and actuator fitting assembly P/N 429-031-222-101 and 429-031-222-102 have life limits of 30,000 and 19,000 Retirement Index Numbers, respectively. However, Transport Canada states these parts are not serialized and therefore their accumulated usage is difficult to track, which

creates a risk that these parts could remain in service beyond their life limits. This condition could result in failure of the part.

### **FAA's Determination**

These helicopters have been approved by the aviation authority of Canada and are approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with Canada, Transport Canada, its technical representative, has notified us of the unsafe condition described in its AD. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all known relevant information and determined that an unsafe condition is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

### **Related Service Information Under 1 CFR part 51**

We reviewed Bell Helicopter Alert Service Bulletin 429-16-34, dated November 10, 2016, which specifies procedures for permanently marking each forward spar and actuator fitting assembly with the serial number of the helicopter.

This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

### **Other Related Service Information**

We also reviewed Bell Helicopter Model 429 Maintenance Manual BHT-429-MM-1, Chapter 4, Airworthiness Limitations Schedule, Revision 26, dated September 9, 2016, which specifies airworthiness life limits and inspection intervals for parts installed on Model 429 helicopters.

### **Proposed AD Requirements**

This proposed AD would require cleaning and marking the helicopter's serial number on each forward spar P/N 429-031-213-103 and 429-031-213-104 and on each actuator fitting assembly P/N 429-031-222-101 and 429-031-222-102. This proposed AD would also prohibit installing any affected part on any helicopter unless it has been marked in accordance with this proposed AD.

### **Differences between this Proposed AD and the Transport Canada AD**

The Transport Canada AD requires compliance within 12 months from its effective date, unless already accomplished. This proposed AD would require compliance within 800 hours time in service.

### **Costs of Compliance**

We estimate that this proposed AD would affect 6 helicopters of U.S. Registry and that labor costs average \$85 per work-hour. We estimate that marking the forward spars and actuator fitting assemblies would require 1 work-hour and no parts would be needed. Based on these estimates, we expect a total cost of \$85 per helicopter and \$510 for the U.S. fleet.

### **Authority for This Rulemaking**

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. "Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs," describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in "Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements." Under that section, Congress

charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

### **Regulatory Findings**

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed, I certify this proposed regulation:

1. Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866;
2. Is not a “significant rule” under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979);
3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska to the extent that it justifies making a regulatory distinction; and
4. Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

We prepared an economic evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this proposed AD and placed it in the AD docket.

### **List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39**

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

## **The Proposed Amendment**

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

### **PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES**

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

#### **§ 39.13 [Amended]**

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

**Bell Helicopter Textron Canada Limited:** Docket No. FAA-2017-0757; Product Identifier 2017-SW-022-AD.

#### **(a) Applicability**

This AD applies to Bell Helicopter Textron Canada Limited Model 429 helicopters, serial number (S/N) 57150, 57168, 57176, 57210 through 57216, 57265, 57266, 57267, and 57287, with a forward spar part number (P/N) 429-031-213-103 or 429-031-213-104 or actuator fitting assembly P/N 429-031-222-101 or 429-031-222-102 installed, certificated in any category.

#### **(b) Unsafe Condition**

This AD defines the unsafe condition as a forward spar or actuator fitting assembly remaining in service after reaching its life limit. This condition could result in failure of a forward spar or actuator fitting assembly and subsequent collapse of the landing gear.

**(c) Comments Due Date**

We must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE Federal Register].

**(d) Compliance**

You are responsible for performing each action required by this AD within the specified compliance time unless it has already been accomplished prior to that time.

**(e) Required Actions**

(1) Within 800 hours time-in-service, clean and identify each forward spar and actuator fitting assembly with the helicopter serial number in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions, paragraphs 3 through 5 and with reference to Figure 1 of Bell Helicopter Alert Service Bulletin 429-16-34, dated November 10, 2016.

(2) After the effective date of this AD, do not install a forward spar P/N 429-031-213-103 or 429-031-213-104 or actuator fitting assembly P/N 429-031-222-101 or 429-031-222-102 on any helicopter unless it has been marked with a serial number in accordance with paragraph (e)(1) of this AD.

**(f) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)**

(1) The Manager, Safety Management Section, FAA, may approve AMOCs for this AD. Send your proposal to: Helene Gandy, Aviation Safety Engineer, Regulations & Policy Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222-5413; email 9-ASW-FTW-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

(2) For operations conducted under a 14 CFR part 119 operating certificate or under 14 CFR part 91, subpart K, we suggest that you notify your principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office or



certificate holding district office before operating any aircraft complying with this AD through an AMOC.

**(g) Additional Information**

(1) Bell Helicopter Model 429 Maintenance Manual BHT-429-MM-1, Chapter 4, Airworthiness Limitations Schedule, Revision 26, dated September 9, 2016, which is not incorporated by reference, contains additional information about the subject of this AD. For service information identified in this AD, contact Bell Helicopter Textron Canada Limited, 12,800 Rue de l'Avenir, Mirabel, Quebec J7J1R4; telephone (450) 437-2862 or (800) 363-8023; fax (450) 433-0272; or at <http://www.bellcustomer.com/files/>. You may review the referenced service information at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177.

(2) The subject of this AD is addressed in Transport Canada AD No. CF-2017-02, dated January 16, 2017. You may view the Transport Canada AD on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> in the AD Docket.

**(h) Subject**

Joint Aircraft Service Component (JASC) Code: 1100, Placards and Markings.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on January 12, 2018.

Lance T. Gant,

Director, Compliance & Airworthiness Division,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

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